

# New York Safe Excavation Checklist

Use this checklist as your step-by-step guide to help prevent dangerous and costly damage to underground natural gas pipelines and other utilities.

*Always contact your state 811 center before digging and for current requirements.*

- ☐ 1. **State law requires calling 811 or making an online request** for utility locates *at least two full working days* before any excavation, excluding the date of your call, weekends and legal holidays. At no cost to you, the 811 center will notify member underground facility owners to mark buried pipelines and other facilities in your dig area. Allow more time for large projects.
    - Upstate New York: **Call 811** or **1-800-962-7962** | **UDigNY.org**
    - Downstate New York – Brooklyn, Queens, Staten Island, Long Island and the Rockaways: **Call 811** or **1-800-272-4480** | **newyork-811.com**
  - ☐ 2. **Notify facility owners** who are not 811 center members about your excavation and request locates directly from them. (Oil and gas production and gathering pipeline systems used primarily to collect oil or gas from wells are not required to join the New York 811 centers.)
  - ☐ 3. **Pre-mark your dig area** with white paint, flags and/or stakes, so locators can more easily identify utilities to be marked. Document your pre-marks with photos or video.
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- ☐ 4. **Keep your ticket number** and compliance documentation handy at the job site.
  - ☐ 5. **If digging in New York City and its five boroughs: The NYC Department of Buildings (DOB) requires you to provide your 811 ticket number when making normal notification of the commencement of earthwork.** The ticket must address all street frontages associated with the excavation, and all documents related to the notification must be kept on-site and available upon request. To complete the DOB earthwork notification, call 1-212-393-2550.
  - ☐ 6. **If your 811 locate indicates you will be working within 15 feet of a high-pressure natural gas transmission pipeline or other critical utility in Downstate New York, or within 20 feet of one in Upstate New York:** Prior to digging, you must attend an on-site meeting and/or have contact with qualified National Grid representatives. National Grid **MUST** be on-site during the excavation.
  - ☐ 7. **Expect responses from all facility operators** confirming utility presence or absence in your work area. UDig NY will send you one email where you can confirm the status of all member utilities' responses. New York 811 will provide all operators' responses for you to check at **managetickets.com** or by phone. Document the responses. If no response, do not dig; call 811.
  - ☐ 8. **Check the site on your start date** to confirm your entire dig area has been marked. Look for aboveground signs of unmarked utilities, such as meters, pipeline markers, valves, etc. Also check for signs of something buried after the locate was completed, such as a fresh trench. If you find unmarked facilities, stop digging and notify 811 and the facility operator. Always assume unmarked lines are in use and present a potential danger.
  - ☐ 9. **Begin excavation within 10 full working days of your locate request.** Request a new ticket if excavation is delayed.
  - ☐ 10. **Maintain the marks.** You are responsible for maintaining locate marks until excavation is complete. Document marks with photos or video. If marks fade or are destroyed, call 811 for a re-mark. Stop work until re-marks are done.

**Smell Gas. Act Fast. Be the one to call 911.**

- ☐ **11. Respect the tolerance zone.** Do not use mechanical excavation equipment within the “tolerance zone,” which spans the width of a marked utility plus 24 inches from each indicated outside edge. Use **ONLY** hand tools or vacuum technology within this zone.
- ☐ **12. Visually verify utility line location and depth** by carefully digging test holes with a blunt hand tool. Approach from the side, not the top, and do not use sharp probes. Find the actual facility, not just tracer wire or warning tape.
- ☐ **13. Locate marks may not be accurate.** If you cannot visually verify a marked line within the tolerance zone, stop work and notify the facility operator.
- ☐ **14. After visual verification,** you may not power dig closer than 4 inches in any direction from the designated or known outside diameter of the line unless the utility operator agrees to this in writing.
- ☐ **15. If you scrape a gas pipe coating or cut a tracer wire,** call National Grid and 811 immediately. Even seemingly minor damage can cause a line to fail or become unlocatable.
- ☐ **16. Excavate around exposed gas pipes cautiously.** Add support if necessary, using materials that will not damage the pipe or its coating. Backfill with care. Consult National Grid for specific backfill rules.
- ☐ **17. Use special care around cast iron pipelines.** Notify National Grid whenever cast iron gas pipe is exposed or falls within an excavation trench’s angle of repose.
- ☐ **18. If you contact a natural gas pipeline and/or suspect a gas leak,** warn others, leave the area quickly and stay away until utility personnel say it is safe to return. Do NOT use matches, lighters, cigarettes, vape pens or anything electrical – not even a light switch, phone or garage door opener. A spark from any of these items could ignite leaking gas, causing a fire or explosion. Leave the excavation open and do not attempt to stop the flow of gas. From a safe location, call 911 and National Grid immediately. (Excavators are required by law to call 911 if gas is escaping.) In Downstate New York, also call **811** or **1-800-272-4480**. Report the incident to your supervisor.

To report emergencies, **call 911** and National Grid immediately.

### In case of gas emergencies:

**Long Island and the Rockaways:**

911 and 1-800-490-0045

**Metro New York:** 911 and 1-718-643-4050

**Upstate New York:** 911 and 1-800-892-2345

### In case of electric emergencies:

**Upstate New York:** 911 and 1-800-867-5222



Know what's below.  
**811** before you dig.

**Smell Gas. Act Fast. Be the one to call 911.**



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Este é um aviso importante. Quiera mandá-lo traduzir.  
Este es un aviso importante. Sirvase mandarlo traducir.  
Avis important. Veuillez traduire immédiatement.  
Questa è un'informazione importante, si prega di tradurla.

Это очень важное сообщение. Пожалуйста, попросите чтобы вам его перевели.  
Đây là một thông báo quan trọng. Xin vui lòng dịch thông báo này.  
這是一個重要的通知。請翻譯一下。

זהו אזהרה חשובה. אנא בקש שתתרגמו עבורך.  
এটি একটি গুরুত্বপূর্ণ বজ্ঞপ্তি। অনুগ্রহ করে এটি অনুবাদ করে নিন।  
Sa a se yon avi enpòtan. Tanpri, fè li tradwi.  
טעאזערעביא עטיב. גאזאנא עקטיביוו א זיא סאד